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Zurich, Wednesday

I should like never to have known ClaudeL His friendship weighs on my thought, and obligates it, and embarrasses it . . . I can still not get myself to hurt him, but as my thought affirms itself it gives offense to his. How can I explain myself to him? I should willingly leave the whole field to him, I should give up everything. . . . But I cannot say something different from what I have to say, which cannot be said by anyone else.

How much more sensuality invites to art than does sentimentality — this is what I repeat to myself as I walk in Zurich. To tell the truth, I don't understand anything here; I feel more foreign to these people, and they to me, than I should be among Zulus or Caribs.

Thursday

When I hear myself in a conversation, I feel like becoming a Trappist. And all the disgust and exasperation I feel does not correct anything in me. The indulgence others must have to have, at times, to put up with me! . . . There are certain shortcomings of my mind that I know and loathe but that I cannot overcome. If at least I could not be aware of them!

Heavy fog over the town and over my thoughts. Lunch with that M, Simon whom Bernard Spicket introduced to me two years ago at the Opera and who, in turn, had introduced to me his friend Dehmel.

After lunch Simon shows me the books of his library with a very evident anxiety not to let me touch them. The assurance of that mind, which clings firmly to what it has and is never distracted.

He talks to me at length (while we go together to the Federal Mu-

seum) of the state of nameless barbarism into which Germany is sinking.

'The ideal of their sensuality," he says, "is the bottle of champagne. The Emperor still holds them in check; but when Wilhelm dies, they will begin to elbow their way. Their strength and health increase with their stupidity, I assure you that I am not exaggerating anything; I have the opportunity to observe them very closely: you cannot imagine the stupidity of those people. But what an advantage it is to be interested in nothing but one's work! People talk a great deal of the wonderful German method; that method has nothing particularly wonderful about it; it is childishly simple; the wonderful thing is not the method but the fact of following it . . . A German who gets dead drunk Sunday evening (and this is the supreme debauch for him) is behind his desk again on Monday morning, stupefied, but not much more so than usual, just as exact and diligent as if he had drunk nothing but water the day before. Their great virtue is patience; their great force lies in never letting themselves be distracted by anything."